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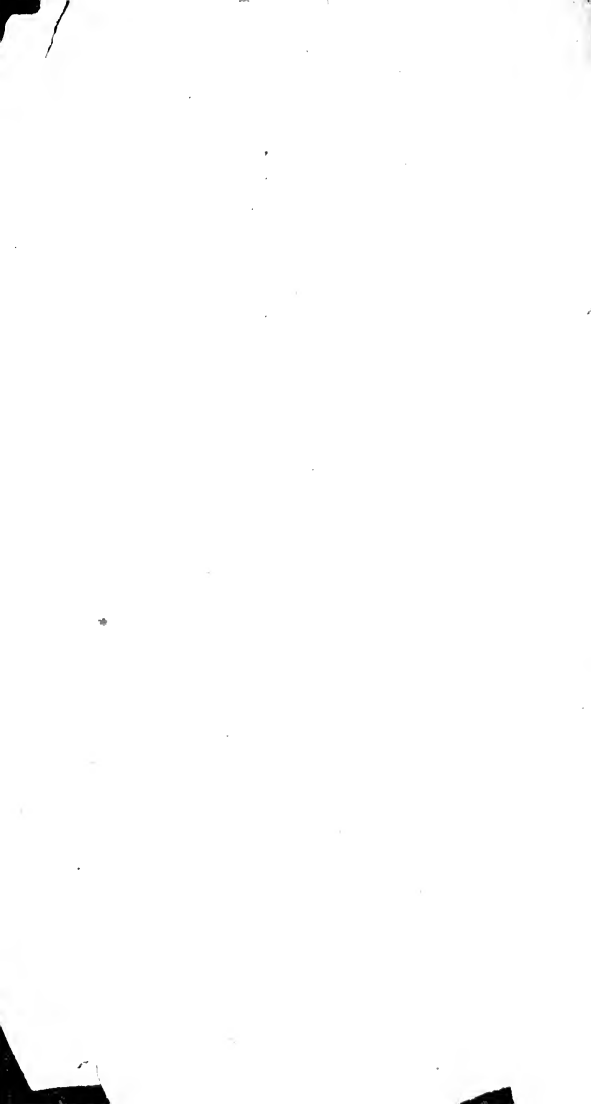
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California
Regional
Facility



THE
SCENERY-SHOWER,
WITH
WORD-PAINTINGS
OF
THE BEAUTIFUL, THE PICTURESQUE, AND THE
GRAND IN NATURE.

“So my friend,
Struck with deep joy may stand, as I have stood,
Silent with swimming sense; yea,
• • • gaze till all doth seem
Less gross than bodily; a living thing
Which acts upon the mind, and with such hues
As clothe the All-mighty Spirit when he makes
Spirits perceive his presence!” — *Coleridge*.

BY WARREN BURTON,
AUTHOR OF “THE DISTRICT SCHOOL AS IT WAS.”

BOSTON:
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TO

GEORGE B. EMERSON, ESQ.,

President of the American Institute of Instruction.

DEAR SIR,

The germ of the present little work was a Lecture delivered before the body over which you preside, in the summer of 1841. The favor with which it was generally received, and especially your own warm commendation, in respect to its useful tendency toward the end in view, have encouraged me to this enlargement and greater finish. I now beg the honor of dedicating the humble volume, through your name, to SELF-CULTURISTS, to PARENTS, to SCHOOL-TEACHERS, and to those SCENERY-SEERS who can already say,

“With a pervading vision — Beautiful!
How beautiful is all this visible world!”

With the highest respect,
Your obedient servant,

WARREN BURTON.

May, 1844.

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ERRATA.

Page 5, line nine from bottom, *for* near *read* new.

“ 6, line eleven from bottom, *for* crookedness *read* crookednesses.

“ 12, line six from bottom, *for* jest *read* zest.

“ 26, line eight from top, *for* portraitures *read* particulars.

“ 51, line four from top, *for* practically *read* poetically.

“ 95, line eleven from bottom, *for* worthy *read* worth.

“ 96, first line at top, *for* alternately *read* attractively.

THE SCENERY-SHOWER.



CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

“How lovely, how commanding! but though Heaven
In every heart hath sown these early seeds
Of love and admiration, yet in vain
Without fair culture’s kind parental aid.”

AKENSIDE.

SCENERY is the appearance of things to the eye. The term is here applied to objects on the face of creation, so disposed by form, color, dimension, or arrangement, or by several of these circumstances together, as to afford peculiar enjoyment to the beholder.

There are some, predisposed by constitution, or of fortunate early education, who

scarcely remember the time when their souls were not pleasurablely alive to the beauty, picturesqueness, and grandeur of nature. The perceptions of others are awakened at a later period, and then they never cease to rejoice, as at the opening of a new sense, to a divinely adapted, unalloyed, and sinless gratification. But the majority of people spend life in the midst of a thousand things thus interesting, and seem entirely unconscious of the charm awaiting their reception. An awful thunder cloud, a glorious rainbow, or a magnificent sunset, might be noticed because it is occasional, but many less striking phenomena and nearly all the permanent aspects of nature, might as well not have been as regards fitness to please by their scenic appearance. This inadvertency is not from lack of faculty to admire, or of time to observe, but because attention has never been specifically directed.

Now, notwithstanding the dormancy of the taste in view, we believe it may be aroused in most, to receive at least satisfactions happening in the way, if not to go with amateur zeal in search of the distant.

The aim of our humble work is to awaken perception and relish by presenting appropriate objects. It is a Scenery-shower to those who have not much contemplated this boundless field of happiness out-spread by skill and beneficence Divine. We would supply a place in reading which has hitherto been nearly or quite vacant. We hope, however, not to be altogether unacceptable to those whose taste has been already developed, and even to a degree far higher than our own. The faint word-paintings on our page may serve at least to recal to conception scenery at the time beyond convenient reach ; to aid them to live over again, in mind, unsinning, heaven-like moments, when they stood in admiration, love and joy, to receive into vision its choicest riches. We trust, moreover, that our endeavor may stimulate such readers to benevolent activity in a similar direction. We now respectfully but earnestly enjoin on them to embrace every opportunity to lead others to a good which Providence has before vouchsafed to them, as by especial favor.

To the less initiated and the entirely unap-

preciating we now turn address. With a directness of speech, pardonable from sincerity of motive, we entreat them to a diligent self-culture in the respect now presented. It is remarkable how a taste for scenery will grow, with pleasure deepening upon pleasure, if it is only steadily and repeatedly directed. It is with the mouldings and tintings of nature, as with the pencillings of art, the more they are studied the more they win and fasten the attention. The several points of interest, figures, hues, lights, shades, proportions, come into clearer and clearer distinctness ; indeed they seem to move visibly out, as it were, into the nearer presence of the sight, as coveting to be observed and to confer enjoyment. With the ordinary mental endowment any one will find valuable reward for such employment of leisure. Those of an organization more particularly predisposing, have only to look, to love to look, till their taste shall grow into a very passion. We beg leave to illustrate by a passage of experience. But first we would take occasion to entreat the candor and kind regard of read-

ers so far as not to impute an egotistical obtrusiveness, if they shall find other personal references by way of illustration, or increase of interest. We know that incident infuses life and entertainment into description which otherwise might be too quiet and less readable to some; and if the incident is personal to the narrator, and modestly presented, it has an air of fresh truthfulness far more absorbing. Then the spirit of the writer thereby, is more present and real to the spirit of the peruser, and they go along together in more sympathetic companionship. Having thus humbly deprecated criticism on our self-personalities, we introduce our first instance of the kind.

Not long ago, after a month's travel in a portion of country near to us, and therefore keeping our perceptions in constant exercise by change of objects, we returned to Boston, and to lodgings in a tame unsightly street. But the prevention of our customary pleasure was quite a discomfort. The city seemed like a very prison. As the nearest remedy we took to the common. It never before seemed so charming, although we had saun-

tered there a thousand times, rapt with its surpassing loveliness. It was now a perfect paradise in contrast with the stiff, dead wood and brick, from which we had escaped. We were surprised, moreover, to find that our perceptive faculties had remarkably gained in concentration, and particularity of attention. We observed the individual form and altitude of tree, the bend of bough, the circularity or the angular juxtaposition of branches, the fleeces of foliage, the hue and shape of skyey interspaces, with a distinctness that was a marvel. There we stood under the great dome of elm at the centre, and gazed up into its leaf-walled labyrinth of crookedness, and conned them this way and that way, all round and all through, as we would the lesson of a book. The very pathways, before rather tiresomely straight, now pleasantly invited the eye by their slight but clearly defined turnings to and fro, and undulations up and down, as if in gentle sportiveness along the verdure. But, O, this verdure, soft as velvet, rich as emerald, spreading between the brown foot-courses, and lying up along the terraces, how

it caught the eye into its lovely embrace and held it.

Our faculties for the picturesque and beautiful had been at school with Nature for weeks, and they had not only grown in affection for their mistress, but had been measurably developed, just as the organ of number or tune may be, by practice and reiteration. Indeed we believe that one might learn to live in and be lost in the enchantments of scenery ; the sense swimming as it were in its own boundless element, drinking in therefrom, unsated, ever growing in strength, widening in capacity, and perpetually coveting for more.

To parents and teachers we now turn in particular address. We would allure their eyes to seek and fasten delighted on those scenes in nature now about to be presented through the dim medium of language. Let them be sure to lead to the same contemplation the tender ones under their responsible charge. We beseech them to reflect, what pure, blissful tastes they may call forth from their ready and waiting minds ; to consider with solemn conscientiousness, what foul desires, low van-

ities, and unworthy images, they can exclude from the immortal capacity by opening it wide to receive the radiant benefactions of the Father of lights.

We have also a word of injunction for those of mature age who have only themselves particularly to care for. We would ask, ought the training of the young to be a matter separate from even their attention and sympathy. Every child belongs in some sort to every other individual near, inasmuch as he may make or mar the happiness of every other by his character and conduct. Is not moral darkness a lack and discomfort to all beholders? And does not moral brightness shine out pleasingly to all eyes? Yes, all have a direct interest in the education of the young, not only for their own sakes, but for the special good they may confer. Line upon line, precept upon precept, may be given in instructive conversation. A lecture, from those now addressed, on any useful subject, will be as valuable to a juvenile group, or to a single individual, as it would be from parent or school-teacher. It might be even

of more worth, inasmuch as the unexpectedness of the instruction will make it more impressive and rememberable. We make application of our hints to the topic of our volume. How might they excite observation, and develope a taste for scenery, in almost any youth present to such attraction. How he would ever afterward, delightfully remember them as the first perhaps to make him aware of such pure enjoyment. We know that they can do this, and that children will not be dull or ungrateful listeners. A portion of our own experience shall illustrate.

In the summer of 1842, on a pleasant afternoon, we had occasion to visit a house situated on what are called Roxbury Highlands. The friend we sought being at the time absent, we wandered out into the neighboring grounds, well known to be charmingly picturesque from their alternate culture and wildness. Our ramble brought us to a clump of trees shooting up from a soil-covered cliff. Beneath the leafy covert was a rustic seat convenient to the lounging body and the looking eye. And there commenced an adventure, which we

now turn to account. Here were two boys, of ten or a dozen years old, one of them the son of our friend. They seemed to have provided for a long afternoon in their shady perch, by a store of bread for luncheon and a book or two for amusement. The sight was gladdening. The future literati of our land they might be, wise enough already to know that fragrant earth and fanning breezes were elements of healthy growth both to body and spirit. They might be two embryo Howitts, who would some time write "Rural Life" in America. At first our new acquaintances were rather shy, seeming to prefer alternate snatches at their bread-feed and book-feed to our conversation. But we knew how to take boyhood, and we quite soon dropped into their companionship, as easily as we might have dropped with them on the greensward. We contrived to get them into our own current of entertainment, which was scenery-seeing, and they took to it marvellously, entirely forgetting their loaf and literature. If we recollect aright at this distance of time, there was near by a tree of singular appear-

ance. They had before observed it as curious ; and now, with our own interest excited, they descanted on the object with surprising volubility. They were now ready to follow the pointing of our finger or the guidance of our footsteps anywhere. We showed them a narrow field, with a grey fence at one end and a cliff at the other, if we remember, and on each side a grove, walling it up with thick-set trunks all regularly round, and overtowered by interlapping foliage. We made them gaze at the spectacle till they thought it beautiful, and seeming almost like a very picture in a book. We then went down to a brook that stole out into view from a bridge-shadow and flowed beside a dusty road, and we gazed down upon its ripples and the stones and pebbles that spotted, and specked, and roughened the bed beneath. They seemed interested in the sight. At any rate they looked, and looking was a discipline that would lead into pleasure. We came back and ranged below a long high cliff overtopped by trees. We tried to make them feel the picturesqueness, although they might not have understood the

word by which we now express the idea. We are certain that they caught the desirable emotions. Indeed the boys grew lively and emphatic in their admiration of the various features of the landscape. We were soon joined in our rambles by a little girl, the sister of one of our companions, and she too caught the spirit of our pastime. They all, with glowing faces and beaming eyes, ran through the groves, scrambled up rocks, getting a peep here and a peep there ; then they mounted up a wooden prospect-tower in one of the grounds for a wider view and still new objects, exclaiming at the different points, see here, or see there, and isn't this, that, or the other, beautiful, or grand ? Thus we were held till it grew quite toward evening, and we were obliged to leave the most elating companionship we had known for many a day. A large portion of the jest might have been the result of mere animal spirits, yet there was withal a kindled and still kindling love for scenery ; we know there was, and in consequence of our success we truly wished that there was such an establishment as a Scenery School,

and that we were appointed Professor of the charming science of the Picturesque. A few days after our adventure we met our friend in the city, and he gave us one of the most cordial looks and greetings that ever gushed from his benevolent aspect. "Come," said he, "and spend a week with us at Roxbury ; the children want to see you." The egotism of recording this commendation is pardonable we trust, as it is necessary to the completion of our narrative, and to point an illustration with the most convincing evidence, — the desire to see us again and for days together.

In closing our preface we will just add, that we long to have children led to gaze on, and study, and intensely enjoy, pure, sinless nature, as we did when a boy without a guide, yea, all alone, amid the scattered farm-spots and rocky and foliaged solitudes of romantic New England. O, that we could ourselves be bodily present to them all, and with finger, and eye, and tone, direct them to whatever is lovely in the less, magnificent in the larger, and grand in the mightier scenes of our multifarious land. Would that we could inspire

their souls with an enthusiasm like that which gives something like a portion of paradise to our own. We trust, however, that soon there will not be wanting to most, alert scenery-showers, who, by glowing words, in tones of love-melody, and by sweetly eloquent looks, shall convey to their souls these purest of visible gifts from the Invisible Giver.

CHAPTER II.

MORNING.

“Hail holy Light, offspring of Heaven first born !”

MILTON.

“The morn is up again, the dewy morn,
With breath all incense and with cheek all bloom,
Laughing the clouds away.”

“Most glorious orb that wert a worship, ere
The mystery of thy making was revealed !
Thou earliest minister of the All-mighty,
And representative of the Unknown —
Who chose thee for his shadow !”

BYRON.

FIRST born of the lovely in nature is the light. The most sweetly, winningly fair of the day, is the dawn. The most purely glorious of effulgent exhibitions, is the full-kindled morning. We place their pictures, therefore, near the entrance of our gallery, as fittest to greet the visitor to its series of shows. At first, there is but a peep of light, like the gleam

of an eye, answering to your own with tender, cheerful welcome. Now a wider flash. Anon the beaming spectacle runs into streaky length, like a changeable ribbon, hemming the horizon. It brightens up more broadly, and glows and glows, varying its hues almost while you wink. Perhaps tufts and bars, or fleecy curtains of cloud, add a garniture of bewitching tinges. At length the spacious East is one vast court of magnificence. Central amid the pomp, the solar monarch rolls royally up with his chariot of changeful flame. The auroral heralds and all the rainbow retinue gradually retire from ministration at the presence, and the Day-King in solitary potency possesses his realm. Human eyes, dazzled to blindness, must now turn away to pursue their duty by his reflected and softer light.

In the summer, simultaneous with this spectacle of the sky, is another, which sceptres with all their power could not command, or wealth with all its monies provide or equal; yet, outspread for millions to enjoy, the poorest as well as richest, will they but look. It is the all-bespangling and sparkling dews.

They begin to glitter with the first glimpses from the orient. They awaken even with the day-star, and gently acknowledge its tender beams. But as the dawn advances, how the beaded prisms glorify the herbage. Had we microscopic eyes, every drop would appear to reflect the exact morning with all its changes on atmosphere and cloud : aurora beholding herself multiplied to millions, by millions of dewy mirrors.

Our sketches are dedicated to the soul through the eye. But accompanying this freshest blazon of lights there is a luxury for the ear with which we would enhance the allurements of the scene. It is music ; music such as first from living breath greeted and satisfied man in sinless Eden ; the “charm of earliest bird.” At the faintest appearance of day a few of the heaven-taught melodists have caught it in their peering sight and are stirring among the branches. Hark ! like prompt choristers, here and there in their leafy coverts they are setting the tune for the general orchestra of the morning. A brief pause ;

then a great orison goes up from amid the
yet twilight-dim trees, seemingly in

“His praise who out of darkness called up light.”

Come out then thou into whose eyes not
only, but into whose immortal soul-depths the
shining may be ! Come out, not only to gaze
but to listen. The most ancient and holiest
visible temple is re-illuminated and specially
adorned for this sacrifice. Freshness and
fragrance float as the incense, and imbue the
breath of life and of vocal expression. On
the grand hosanna, as a tuneful chariot, fling
thine own grateful worship, to roll upward to
Him, who would have from thee a melody of
the heart, harmonious with those angels whose
kindred thou art, for whose companionship
thou art designed, and who,

“with songs

And choral symphonies, day without night
Circle his throne rejoicing.”

CHAPTER III.

VERDURE.

“ Gay Green !

Thou smiling Nature’s universal robe !

United light and shade ! where the sight dwells

With growing strength, and ever new delight.”

THOMSON.

THE rich scenery seasons open after the repose of winter with the hue thus described. Of all the family of lights it is the eye’s chief favorite. It holds the sense the longest without weariness or satiety. It is the wise fiat of nature that her “universal robe” should perpetually please. Yet a taste for the enjoyment of this color might become more deep and intense than it generally is. We wish that we could somewhat present its attraction to the less cultivated and careless observer through the medium of language.

We paint as it appears to one loving the verdure with a very passion.

The spring very gradually produces the hue, sprinkling it here and there, as if the uninured sight might be oppressed with its own luxury, were there suddenly presented that boundless bounty at length cast abroad. At first perhaps a verdant line may be discovered close under the sunny side of abodes, as if seeking domestic protection from the yet lingering cold. The tender creature may be found also nestling in some warm little hollow, where the eye may leap in like a fondling from the surrounding brownness. That relic of the winter, the snow-drift, softening under the subtle heat, is made to distil into nutriment for this emerald child of the sun, and it embraces its dying nurse with its tender contrast of beauty. Now a witching stripe is traced from where the streamlet steals out from its source, and

“is faintly seen,

A line of silver mid a fringe of green.”

There are also large mats of spreading verdure in more sheltered nooks. There are

fields of more fertile soil and sunnier aspect which soon present one broad unbroken expanse of the new herbage. Here the vision can leap into the clear, bright depths, and as it were, swim along bathed and imbued with its best adapted and most delicious element.

In the early spring and in the later autumn, when vegetation was just peeping from its root, or was withering back again to its root, we have ourselves often walked to a considerable distance to gaze on the young grass that thickly carpeted a warm hill-side, exposed to the enriching drainage of buildings above. This firstling of the vegetating fields when contrasted with the adjacent and dusky bareness, was a perfect fascination, a very elysium to the sight. It is some years since we dwelt in the vicinity of this particular spectacle, yet how often has it spread its soft witchery to our conception. It has been a pastime to recollection amid the perplexing cares, indeed a very solace amid the troubles of life.

But we must hasten after the progressive season and finish our vernal painting. The

delicious color widens through the valleys, sheets over the hills, runs up and enfolds shrub, tree, and the whole of the great woods, till all is one wide emerald magnificence. The sight is now satisfied but not cloyed with one continuous color. Indeed it finds a sort of ecstasy in the vastness of its single-hued range. Let it repose near by, or journey all round and afar, it is boundless, beauteous green.

CHAPTER IV.

PICTURES OF NATURE AND OF ART.

“ Beauty — a living presence of the earth,
Surpassing the most fair ideal forms
Which craft of delicate spirits hath composed
From earth’s materials — waits upon my steps ;
Pitches her tents before me as I move,
An hourly neighbor — Paradise and groves
Elysian — Fortunate fields — like those of old
Sought in the Atlantic main — why should they be
A history only of departed things,
Or a mere fiction of what never was ?
For the discerning intellect of man,
When wedded to this goodly universe
In love and holy passion, shall find these
A simple produce of the common day.”

WORDSWORTH.

THE eye may be profitably trained to observation by all things visible whatever. And in many of these which are generally un-

noticed there may be found a scenic pleasure worth securing. For the sake of discipline, we would carefully notice any little protuberance that knobs, or hollow that indents the land, and indeed any distinctive lineament or point on the surface. All colors with their shifting lights and shades, all plants, shrubs and rocks, however lowly and uninviting amid more imposing things, are worth the scanning, if for nothing more at least to gain in minuteness of attention. But even where two or three of these are in juxtaposition, there is a sort of picturesqueness which may afford an humble pleasure of appreciable value to the studious eye. Wherever we are almost we may be at our discipline and some degree of enjoyment. Suppose we are standing leisurely at a dwelling door. There is perhaps the stone-paved or pebble-strewn walk running down to the gate ; or it may be nothing but a little path foot-worn upon the turf, or into the unsodded soil. There is a real picture-like beauty in this as contrasted with the planted borders or the plain herbage through which it passes. There is moreover

the fence around; it matters not if it be a rough, broken stone wall, or of rudest boards or bars, all askant with age and neglect. Their odd shapes, careless positions, patches of moss, and old weather-stains, are worth looking at. Indeed when the likenesses of these are skilfully portrayed by the pencil, they are considered beauties. Surely the accurate observation of such substances will at least prepare the taste for the artist's imitations.

We beg leave to detain the reader a little by a few remarks about such productions of art, together with some practical hints appertaining to the scenery-shows of nature.

What an admirable picture! exclaim the tasteful, contemplating a fine landscape from the artist's skill. Beautiful! exclaim the less tasteful in view of coarser or the coarsest imitation. How pretty! cries childhood over almost any thing of the kind. Educated and ignorant, older and younger, find enjoyment in pictures. One reason probably is, that the presentation of a picture is occasional, and it has somewhat the novelty of an incident about it, and therefore seizes on the atten-

tion with a sudden grasp as things occasional and incidental generally do. Another reason may be, that a picture is a little spectacle separate from every thing else. It is not amalgamated with and lost among innumerable other spectacles of a similar kind. The eye easily runs round its limits and dwells on its few portraitures undisturbed by multiplicity. Besides, one feels the wonderfulness of imitation and resemblance ; feels, though perhaps not much thinks, what a curious fact it is that the appearance of real substances which stand up from the ground and can be grasped with the hands and climbed upon with the feet, may be put on a surface of unvarying flatness, and be made almost to seem the very things they copy.

Now, we believe, that with the exception of the circumstances of novelty, resemblance and admired skill, all the pleasure found in a picture may be afforded by original nature. All creation presented to the eye is but a vast painting, a spectacle of colors with lights and shades. Let the illuminations from the heavens be shut out by night and clouds, and no

artificial one's of earth be instead, and the whole vanishes, never more to exist unless these illuminators again lend their aid. It is the experienced consciousness of substantial matter, having definite size, shape, and other qualities, and also of the different distances of objects, together with the multiplicity and universality of colors, that prevents the mind from the truth that all is but color that the eye beholds, to be gone in a moment bereft of this.

The commonness of the spectacle, moreover, deprives it of interest ; but if the eye does pause to observe, it is often confused and bewildered in the complexity and variousness, unless it be disciplined to particular inspection. Again and again therefore we commend any aspect of nature, any little portion of earth with its few objects above, to studious observation. Roll up the hand and look through at the space thus separated from other things, and the attention will be thus concentrated and distinctness acquired, as in a gallery of paintings by the little tubes there provided for visitors.

Gaze, gaze, discipline the perceptions, and with a constantly growing pleasure shall be verified the poet's encouraging thought, that things beautiful are

“ A simple produce of the common day.”

CHAPTER V.

SWIMMING FIELDS — DISTANT FENCE-LINES — OPEN
ROADS — WAYS THROUGH WOODS.

“A thing of beauty is a joy forever ;
Its loveliness increases ; it will never
Pass into nothingness, but still will keep
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing ;
Therefore, on every morn are we wreathing
A flowery band to bind us to the earth.”

KEATS.

WE now present a few more ordinary appearances, not without scenic interest if but observed with the spirit felt by the bard, or which by culture may spring up in almost any one not a bard.

Most have noticed how a day or two of rain, such as we sometimes have in summer, will drench and saturate the fields with wetness, so that the herbage, while it freshens to a livelier green, seems as it were to be buoyed

up by the liquid element that fills it. After a parching drought how the thirsty eye drinks and luxuriates in such a spectacle. Rainy-day idleness might here snatch at least a sip of pleasure ; and the tasteful traveller would somewhat forget the drizzling clouds in such a refreshment of vision.

The straight stone wall dividing green fields is a pleasant object to look at, especially if the roughness be lost in the distance and the fence appear as a dark smooth line marking the verdure. In the many positions of fences relative to each other and to the grassy level, the standing grain, the rounding hill, or the tall wood, there are various interesting aspects, which to the uninitiated need to be pointed out with the finger as well as described in language.

There is a picturesque beauty in a simple road, with a strip of herbage for a border and a grey wall for rim, then on either side the expanses of field or pasture verdure between which it runs. We have many a time stopped and gazed with a very desirable pleasure, at a little fragment of road thus circumstanced, rising

white out of a valley and curving over a hill and then again lost. Indeed the richest picture in the gallery of art would not tempt us to exchange for its possession the capacity of enjoying the scenic beauty of a dusty highway, only let it be far enough off to give its best display, and nothing of its dust.

A word more about roads. Take one stretching straight and far through a wood. As it runs on and on, its vista of whitish bottom, verdant walls and skyey roof, seem to narrow and narrow toward a point, the perspective in the distance diminishing to miniature like a picture.

There is also the winding path through the woods. You turn this way and that, and perhaps undulate up and down. New objects burst continually on the view, and the eye must be busy to catch them. You wonder all the while what will come next, and where you shall come out, like as in the fortunes of a romance. Then when you at length emerge, the brighter light and the broad clear lands seem like the happy conclusion of an uncertain story. By a cultivated relish for ap-

pearances of this sort, how might we lighten the tediousness of travel. How, catching words already quoted from the poet, we should find beauty waiting on our steps and pitching her tents before us as we move, an hourly neighbor.

CHAPTER VI.

A DOMICILIARY SPECTACLE.

“ Me, oft has fancy, ludicrous and wild,
Soothed with a waking dream of houses, towers,
Trees, churches and strange visages, expressed
In the red cinders, while with poring eye
I gazed, myself creating what I saw.”

COWPER.

WE have a poet's warrant for the first scene of this chapter ; and if the reader has perused the observant and graphic Cowper, the rest will not be without interest, although the dear old bard has not painted it on his page. He loved almost every possible show in nature, and he who has caught the spirit of his muse will require of us no further apology. Twilight, and at the fireside ; no lamp, no book, no work ; need the space be lacking of interest to the solitary sitter ? Let him watch the glow of the in-

tensely ignited coals and realize the soothing waking dream.

As the fire works round and through the fuel, how the eye, aided a little by fancy, perceives all sorts of fairy shows, a miniature theatre of shifting scenery. But the portraiture of our quotation suffices for this ; so we pass to another.

Suppose it bright day time, when hue and motion are more distinctly visible, there is the smoke, that accompaniment of flame, not particularly desirable for comfort or cookery, — yet it is not undesirable as a spectacle of color, form and motion, to a child or anybody else. How mysteriously copious the vapor steals out from the apparently solid substance, of a whitish blue, from a green stick, curling and mingling with the darker blue of the drier. With what grace it turns, and twists, and bulges out its fleece after fleece, and then unrolls and shoots more straightly up through the flue.

There is another smoke-scene from the chimney top worth beholding. Take a still autumnal morning, with what stateliness the creature rises into a tall perpendicular column

as if it stood compact like a tree, yet every particle is in motion ; then there is the spreading out and folding over at the summit like a canopy, sometimes the whole diversified with noticeable varieties of color in the sunlight. How often, when but a child, have we watched this ordinary exhibition. The eye would be caught by the wreathy wile, and be borne up and up till released by the unrolling of its fairy-like vehicle, when it would return down and be furled and wafted up again ; then perhaps it would scud away and sport along a bank of the blue vapor piled in the lower air. No possible genius of the pencil could create that combined witchery of form, color and movement, on the canvass ; yet it soars above the poor man's house as well as the rich man's, and might equally amuse the children of both, and be a sweetly remembered pastime of early years, and withal be pleasantly renewed to a scenic taste ever afterward in life.

CHAPTER VII.

ROCKS AND CLIFFS.

“Stop, stop ! Let that rock alone.”

“It is a little feature on the landscape’s face which
Gives it expression.”

WORDSWORTH.

Rocks are striking features of landscape, particularly in New England, yet how little are they thought of, except by a few, in respect to the interest of scenery. By the grown-up they are mostly regarded as useful materials for walls, or as incumbrances and impediments, wished out of the way ; to children, they are play’s ambition-pinnacles, on which to climb high and stand up tall, or from which to leap boldly down in the friskiness of animal spirits, as the lambs do in the pastures. True, rocks are an impediment to tillage, and let them be got out of the way. They are good for fences,

and let fences be made of them, but this is no reason why their picturesqueness, their beauty and grandeur, should not be observed and enjoyed. I know some rocks that are much in the way, and it might cost a month, take a life through, for the shoes and wheels of business to go round them, and if split up would underpin a meeting house or a market, yet we would not remove them any more than we would pull a star from the sky, on account of their perpetual blessing to the eye of taste.

Now let the perception be trained to enjoy these prominences of the ground. For this purpose any rock of the nearest field may afford the primary lesson. Let the different and peculiar dimensions, shapes and colors, be noticed. There are the little picturings of moss, the stripe caused by some diversity of the original elements, or the fissure which, though small, allures the eye by a sort of mystery in its depth and shadow. These trifling circumstances might be made interesting at least to the child whose taste for things of the kind has not been crushed and annihilated by the great and the grand of broader experience. A mi-

nute observation of these insignificant peculiarities will discipline the perceptions to be minutely observant when going out into wide and multiplex nature, where otherwise attention might be confounded and lost in a roving, bewildered gaze. Besides, we apprehend that an observer thus disciplined would be more likely to entertain the feeling of sublimity and wondering romance, at the subsequent spectacle of mighty gorges, crags and pinnacles, so vastly exceeding the diminutive things to which interest had previously been limited.

We would form a sort of friendly interest in rocks; let the heart grow to them, as it were, in consequence of pleasant remembrances. An anecdote will somewhat illustrate our meaning. A friend informed us that when in Europe, he visited the celebrated Wordsworth. The poet took him round his grounds, showing him the points of engaging scenery with poetic rapture and patriotic pride. While walking in the garden some laborers there were about prying up, for removal, a rock in a grassy corner—an ordinary rock, which stuck out from its bed with a perpendicular and grey

mossy face. “Stop, stop,” cried the owner, “let that rock alone.” He then remarked to our friend—“I would not have that rock removed on any account. Insignificant as it may appear, it signifies something to me ; my eye has glanced at it and gazed on it for years, it is a little feature on the landscape’s face which gives it expression. It shall now have an appropriate inscription on its little grey weather-side, and I will write a sonnet to it.” The patriotic poet spoke with a fervor about that old rock, which surprised the American.

Now the poet’s rock was dear to his heart, simply from long familiarity. To this kind of interest we would join that of peculiar associations. On a first visit to a rock, read passages from some favorite book, peruse perhaps the last new work of pure-minded genius, or be accompanied by an agreeable friend for the sweet of mutual converse or song and sympathy of taste. In this way how will memory be starred, as it were, with softly gleaming points to which the soul shall in the future turn back and find solace from the darkness of trouble, or the chilly and stumbling night of extreme age.

One of the most interesting fragments of scenery the eye scans and perches on, are the cliffs in our hill-sides. Many a home in our diversified country is not without one or more of these in vicinity. Perhaps they are set smoothly and perpendicularly into the earthy framework, like a piece of hammered masonry, and clad with green and gray moss, as with fanciful tapestry. Or they project roughly and beetle over, impressing the feeling of grandeur. Perhaps shrubs shoot out from crevices, or bristle at the top in fantastic wildness, or trees tower therefrom in waving pride at their pre-eminence. Sometimes the rock-show is of quite a clear whiteness, or has spots or stripes of chalky brilliancy, charmingly contrasting with the grassy carpet beneath and pendant foliage above. Now let observation be particularly directed to such noble features of the landscape. Let us grow romantic about them—it will do no harm. If some interesting incident of the past may be found connected with them, or with any other spot of earth, so much the better. We cannot but repeat that on a pleasure-seeking jaunt to such spectacles,

a choice of company is truly worth the seeking. One or two individuals of tender and touching conversation, or the gift of sweetening song, are far preferable to noisy, gamboling numbers. Let all the feelings be spiritual and quiet, rather than animal and frolicsome, especially on a first visit. Thus you will open in the soul a little fountain of sweet and tender recollections, which shall be perennial, and sprinkle its freshness at length it may be on withering age.

Indeed we would have all sorts of pleasing scenery connected in the mind with the most agreeable remembrances, but most especially, the scenery around dear native home. We would labor sedulously to make the grounds there a sort of Eden-place to the affections. Then in after life, when parents shall be laid in the dust, and brothers and sisters scattered widely away, what a paradise of heart-hallowed beauty, will this native landscape be !

CHAPTER VIII.

HILLS AND VALES.

“ The Hills of New England
How nobly they rise,
In beauty or wildness
To blend with the skies !
Their green slopes, their grey rocks,
Their plumage of trees,
New England, my country,
I love thee for these !

“ The Vales of New England
That cradle her streams ;
All greenness and glimmer,
Like landscapes in dreams ;
Their rich laps for labor,
Their bosoms for ease,
New England, my country,
I love thee for these !”

OLD SCRAP BOOK.

THE Hills and Vales ! the very words have
a charm, embalmed as they are in the sweet

essence of rural poetry shed all along the course of time. How infinitely diversified their appearances; countless, countless shapes, as if the fingers of Nature had played over her continents in sportive invention, configuring the surface. There are broad heaving swells with conforming platters of land between; long ridges lifting more suddenly, alternating with long gouges below; and the more precipitous heights of all sorts of figures, looking down into dells of novelty equally diverse. The professed scenery-seer we need not advise, but to those who would seek his rare pleasure, we would say, carefully contemplate all their varieties of aspect; con them like a lesson in a book. It is remarkable how the organ of form will strengthen and sharpen to its office. It will come to detect each one of all the multiplicity of outlines. Figure is its sole subject and enjoyment, and it will feast on the beauty of curves, with the relish of angles. There are sizes, distances and relative positions, for the note of other faculties, giving to each appropriate gratification.

There is another study in close connection,

it is the conforming sky. From some nether stand among many hills, gaze this way and that, over and around, and how the azure dome is bordered at the base with jagged cuts, angled notches, quick-heaving arches, or long narrow scoops according as the earth configures its own contour. Some relations of the land to the horizon, present most exquisite specimens of the picturesque. From one extremity of a long deep valley peer away through to the other. A portion of the heaven is close down in there, like a sapphire wall, and it seems as if you might go and place your hand against it, or look through the crystal azure into mysteries beyond.

Color will of course mingle with and array the charms of form and proportion, but as we treat of it elsewhere, we omit it in this connection. As this outline of the hills and vales meets the eye of the reader, his fancy will naturally clothe them in all their necessary variety of hues.

We spoke of the growth and pleasure of the mere perceptive faculties amid such interesting presentments of their specific objects.

But there is above, and reigning over these, another power to which these are the hand-maids. Ideality, or the intense feeling of the beautiful, and the exulting glow at its possession. How does it open and open, amid such scenes, for streams of beauty to glide in, as from many fountains tended by its servitors at the eye. But over all these there is another sentiment, Religion, to which Ideality in duty should minister, sending up its joys thereto, beautifying holiness. He who worships not from this fane of hill and vale, receives not their charm into his highest, happiest sense, and he knows not what influence descends from the Worshipped and All-beautiful, to invest and sanctify the scene with a still richer loveliness.

We would now call attention to a few particular localities. There is a peculiar beauty about some of the hills of New England, which we fear are by many of its inhabitants hardly noticed. We refer to their oval forms. How gracefully they round up and curve into the sky. There are a hundred, or indeed a thousand eminences

of this shape, in the neighborhoods of the Monadnock and the Wachusett Mountains. We will try to paint a scene embracing the latter. The Wachusett at twilight, and at other times in certain states of weather, is a very queen of mountain beauty, rearing its round, dark, blue summit against the peculiar sky. As the traveller crinkles among the hills below, it exhibits various charming aspects, and indeed seems alive and in motion, dancing as it were, to exhibit its graces. There is one playful illusion with which we have been often amused when in that part of the country. In ascending a hill in an angular direction, we would catch a first glimpse of the mountain, just a blue rim projecting beyond the green of the intervening hill. Rising higher the rim would broaden, or rather the body of the round mountain would seem to roll out more and more into sight ; the hill apparently wheeling one way and the mountain another, as if turning on an axis like machinery, by some invisible agency. It seemed to fancy that earth below were mimicking the dance of the spheres above, with a soft music unheard by

mortal ears. Would not childhood, would not any one find recreation in this spectacle, enjoying and sympathizing with the sportiveness of Nature.

We never travel the old winding roads in the vicinity of Boston without the ever renewed pleasure of gazing upon the oval hills. We owe a tribute to these and all the scenery around. It has been our study and enchantment for years.

What vallies too, what water sheets ! What diverse sprinkles and clusters and lines of architecture, peeping from amid gardens or gleaming under tree-rows ! Altogether, it is a show that the arid South, and even the magnificent West, might come over, just to see. It is the very poetry of landscape, and in spite of us its spirit and imagery will, but O how faintly, run verse-like along our page.

Kind City ! Can thy travelled son tell where
Lie sweeter scenes than thy environs are ?
Does e'er his soul so leap from self away
As when they greet him homeward from thy bay ?
The oval hills, the wandering vales between,
Groves, cliffs and ways, with glimpse of watery sheen,
And culture's carpet, rich as wealth can weave,
Tinged with all dyes that shower and sun-beam leave ;

Elysian landscapes round thy thousands flung,
Which, Albion owning, Genius would have sung.
Let Fashion forth then, Toil full oft depart
To *study* these, yea, get them all by heart.
'Tis Nature's *Athenæum*, full and free,
Its walls the hills, the meeting sky and sea.
At morn the Zephyr, Ocean breeze at even,
Brush o'er and air these pencillings of Heaven.
Should seraph Beauty beckon them to roam,
God's stronger servant, Health, shall bear them home.
Remembrance copies; Taste, for aye, shall find
Those distant scenes hung round the halls of mind.
Send forth thy *poor*, of charities thou Queen!
And grace their souls as they have never been.
Thy teachers with them—learned of their Lord,
To show in nature lines of sacred Word.
Command thy merchant princes, large to give,
That lowly life may really come to live,
O, not "by bread alone," want's wrested good,
But all the spirit's growth can ask for food;
Live in all beauty, eye or thought can find;
Live conscious man, mid lordliest mankind;
But more than all, live in sweet, grateful love
To those who lifted them, themselves above;
To Him, who clad and sent with golden wing
Men, angel-like, "these little ones" to bring,
And fold them in their pinions at His feet
Where rich and poor should all together meet.
Do thus, dear City—noblest of the North—
Of all the land, e'en now, for life's best worth!
Do thus, and then, thy populous robe all white,
With virtues gemmed, God's glory for the light,

Thy presence o'er a continent shall shine,
Yea, charm the poor, proud South to seek thy shrine,
In wisdom's meekness then to haste away,
To raise her darkened realms to brighter day ;
Convinced of *equal* freedom's worth—the good
Of *other* chains—soft links of brotherhood—
Of wealth from toil at thought ; of whipless awe,
Enrobed in love, but throned upon the law.
Erst Queen of Learning ! take a loftier name,
The Era calls with its new tongue of flame ;
A country's Prophet—lift thy baptized brow,
Thy mission prove, and do the mighty—now !

CHAPTER IX.

TREES.

“ Bravely thy old arms fling
Their countless pennons to the fields of air,
And like a sylvan king
Their panoply of green still proudly wear.
When at the twilight hour
Plays through the tressil crown the sun’s last gleam,
Under thy ancient bower
The school-boy comes to sport, the bard to dream.”

H. T. TUCKERMAN.

WE now pay admiring regard to the lofty monarchs of the vegetable realm. Indeed they not only reign over the humble herbage and bush at their feet, but they hold a sort of lordship over the whole scenic earth. They stand above the water, sheltering its repose, or hold it in review as with purling music it moves on its train. They protect the mea-

dows ; they hold court in the vallies ; they display upon the hills ; they throne themselves on the mountains ; and look down on the subject lands. We have spoken indeed practically, yet without a figure we can almost say that we ourselves do a real homage to the trees.

But we must portray them more particularly as they appear in their princely bearing and attire. Each species has characteristic traits of appearance, and if we may so speak, costume, features, and complexion of its own. What gracefulness of the locust and willow ; what column-like symmetry and stateliness of the maple ; what nobleness of the strong armed oak ; what arching grandeur of the elm ; then what varied magnificence of the great continuous forest.

How many different hues the practised eye may detect in the common mantle of verdure. Here is the deep evergreen, fir or hemlock, set in among the beech, maple, or birch, or among several of the kinds together. How tastefully the darker and the lighter greens internotch, rapturing the eye with their

thickly intermingling, yet clearly contrasted hues. Take your stand on a height and gaze down into some bosomed valley, thickly studded with trees ; maples for instance. Each one rounds up its top with a separate swell. The eye is allured ; and leaping down, it swims as it were in a sea of verdurous billows.

Another appearance of a wood is the shade it casts upon a bordering field or pasture, richly deepening its green. Stand outside, in the clear open light, and gaze upon the darksomeness that lies away under the umbrageous arches, and you might fancy a body of night left there to slumber, guarded by a file of out-skirting trees to protect from the incursions of the surrounding day.

A pleasant spectacle in the country is the fruit orchard, with its carpet of herbage beneath. At least we know of one who in very childhood gazed with ever fresh delight on so ordinary a scene. 'There were the rows of apple trees, with branches so long, and foliage so thick, as to cast the intervening grass almost entirely into shade. The eye from the house-window would run along from this end

to that of one of the vistas, and back again, then rest upon the leaf-shadowed verdure, anon start to and fro again, as if at a sort of gambol with its favorite hue.

It may be that the reader will not sympathize with us in the pleasure afforded by these common aspects of nature. If so, we would enquire if they would not please even him when laid in accurate picture by a genius of the pencil? Why then shall the Infinite Artist paint his perfect originals and the eye not see, the taste not admire?

But we have one more instance of tree-scenery which cannot but attract the dullest vision, the tamest taste, when once made known. We have never seen it mentioned in print, or scarcely alluded to in conversation, and yet it is a spectacle as fascinating as imagination herself could invent or desire.

We refer to the peculiar aspect of the tree, standing between the eye and the morning, or more especially the evening twilight. Withdraw all consciousness from other objects, and fasten the gaze intently on the tree displayed against the golden, the purple, or the crimson

of the sky. Mark how distinctly you perceive the trunk, and every bough, branch, twig and leaf — a perfect pencil drawing seemingly upon the glowing, changing canvass of evening. Or let the fancy take another turn. The object, particularly as the twilight fades, has a sort of semi-spiritual or spectre-like appearance, as if Nature were at a pantomime of arboreous apparitions for the entertainment of Romance at her most favorite hour. We deem ourselves peculiarly fortunate, when in an evening walk we can find a row of locusts, elms, or maples, or any kind or arrangement of trees, to disport the eye and fancy with, without hindering the needed exercise. There are few spectacles that keep us away from the topics of the study, and relieve the thought-worn brain more effectually, than this daily-renewing illusion of the twilight.

CHAPTER X.

COLORS OF VEGETATION.

“ Resplendent hues are thine !

Triumphant beauty — glorious as brief !

Burdening with holy love the heart’s pure shrine,

Till tears afford relief.

When my last hours are come,

Great God ! ere yet life’s span shall all be filled,

And these warm lips in death be ever dumb,

This beating heart be stilled,

Bathe Thou in hues as blessed —

Let gleams of heaven about my spirit play !

So shall my soul to its eternal rest

In glory pass away !”

WM. J. PARODIE.

WHY has the Creator painted our world with such infinite diversity, why so exquisitely spun the nerves of perception, if the one was not intended to run along the other with an infinite diversity of visual pleasure to the soul ?

We apprehend that immeasurably more might be enjoyed from the changing colors of vegetative nature were there due discipline. Let us briefly present a few lessons for practice.

How many distinct hues of verdure in vernal vegetation. What numerous tints of the same color not only, but numberless different dyes, the various species of vegetables assume, in all their changes from their first tender green of spring to the last prevailing brownness of autumn. Now let children be trained, let others train themselves, curiously to observe all these variegations from the shifting year. Discriminate each separate kind of grain by its hue. Notice also the alterations as the crop advances toward the harvest. Had we space we might point out noticeable traits in each species. As a single illustration, embracing form as well as color, does one to a thousand observe the peculiar early beauty and later magnificence of that common spectacle, a field of Indian corn? There are the leaves at their broadest expansion toward the stalk, tapering off to their utmost elongation ;

and these all waving and fluttering in the breeze like so many verdant and pointed streamers. Then it lifts in tasselled stateliness, as if in plummy pride at the golden riches beneath.

There are the fields of the smaller grains. How graceful the nodding in the gentle breeze, in color, form and motion, minutely, multitudinously picturesque. While yet retaining their greenness, and in a bright day under a stronger wind, they seem to flow away in waves of silvered emerald. But in full and heavier ripeness, they roll magnificently along in billowy gold. The most enchanting view, for variety, richness, and spacious expanses of vegetable coloring, is a well cultured farm just before the earliest reaping. It would seem that the sun had mustered his hues to a gorgeous gala, in welcome to the gatherers commencing their long train of harvests. Come out, ye stived inhabitants of the hot city, for rural walk or ride ; especially, ascend some neighboring eminence, and be enchanted. Pause travelers on the uplands overlooking the Connecticut river meadows. The sight will leap down

upon those diverse, alternating stripes of luxuriance, and acknowledge the richest paradise it can find between the bloomy beautiful-ness of Spring and the foliage glories of Autumn.

The honors just mentioned as belonging to the two opposite seasons we scarce dare describe. Many geniuses have painted their perfections with an appropriate perfectness of language, which needs must forestall what would be here but a poor dappling of words.

Suffice it to say of the blossomed Spring, it is the queenly infancy of the year at the utmost exuberance of joyousness and gala. Soils, heats, waters, airs, lights, have all conspired in preparation, and still tend around for nurture, attire and embellishment. Odors minister incense, breezes fan freshness ; the heavenly canopy varies with shadowy blue and the clearest deeps of azure ; or it is decorated with lustrous banner-folds of cloud, which unfurling, shake down gems that perchance drop through rainbows, and then melt for the bathing of the favorite. The brooding pa-

rentage of feathered life carols gratulation. The streams purl, the foliage whispers in symphony. Human infancy laughs and claps its hands, and leans in embrace on the flowery bosom of its own sweet, tenderly-beautiful emblem. The heart of maturer man glows, his face brightens in sympathy. The pageant passes, and the year stands up in the youthful stateliness of summer.

The grander pomp of the later season, finishing into perfect ripeness, or resting from its fruitful energies and rejoicing over its abundance, we cannot indeed portray. We will just dare an outline and lift away our inadequate pen. There is serene September, after reviving rains spreading a carpet of freshened green. It is as if there had fallen from the skies a carpet of summer verdure on which Autumn might drop its fruitage from its own yet green foliage. In these orchard-gifts, what richness, what variety of hues. It would seem that the tints of Spring had arisen from the perished blooms, and climbed into the branches and stolen over the pro-

ducts, anticipating the gust of palate by a feast to the eye.

But now comes the great, final display of orchard, grove, and forest pride. Go out now into nature and let the vision run wild. Go up miles from the duller sea-lands among the hills. Here are the nobler maple-woods in great congregation with their kindred kings of vegetation, but outvying all. The purple, crimson, orange, and gold of the morning ; the bright, the deepening, and darkening changes of evening seem broken into fragments, together with rainbows unravelled, and all flung abroad in dazzling vestures, and these laced and spangled with the silver glitter of waters. Glance through the vallies, gaze up the hill-sides ; stand upon the highest eminences and cast the sight down, spread it far away wide ; beauty, magnificence, glory ! the eye's largest and most ecstatic range in the luxury of colors. Turn upward in adoring gratitude to him who holds in his hand the pencilling sun, and paints this and all scenes for thee ; who also transfers his pictures to the vast halls

of thy memory to be fresh for recurrence
through immortal ages. O lose thyself

“in Him in Light Ineffable !

Come then, expressive silence, muse his praise !”

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CHAPTER XI.

WATERS.

“ From deep mysterious wanderings, your springs
Break bubbling into beauty ; where they lie
In infant helplessness awhile, but soon
Gathering in tiny brooks, they gambol down
The steep sides of the mountains, laughing, shouting,
Teasing the wild flowers, and at every turn
Meeting new playmates still to swell their ranks ;
Which with the rich increase resistless grown,
Shed foam and thunder, that the echoing wood
Rings with the boisterous glee ; while o’er their heads,
Catching their spirit blithe, young rainbows sport,
The frolic children of the wanton sun.”

THOMAS WARD.

WATER makes a large portion of the world’s scenery. In its various aspects of repose and motion it is beautiful or magnificent. In its figured courses amid the diversities of land, it is the animate picturesque, running away

with the eye, delightfully lost in wandering captivity.

We will begin with the most insignificant water-traits. They will be of use to the teacher, training the child to profitable observation. And why shall not the adult self-culturist also educate himself in these primary lessons of lovely minutiae. Let every one gaze on the rill, the brook, or the river, till he shall be familiar with every characteristic, and learn to love the gamesome runner, as if it were a living acquaintance and had a responding spirit. Observe every short turn or larger graceful sweep. Pause over the little eddy or whirl produced by projecting bank or intervening rock, and look steadily till the eye gets lost in the little maze of ripples. A considerable water-fall is always an attraction. But even in the tiny rill we would notice the little tumult of waters gurgling over the rocks, it is at least a discipline to the sight. Perhaps there is a slight cascade caused by a trifling stone. Or a chance-lodged chip or leaf may form a brief space of sheeted water, smooth and transparent as glass, and

a very crystal, with the marvel of all its particles in motion.

Then there is the bason into which a precipitous rivulet may fall and stilly linger. Here the eye gazes down into the dusky depth until stopped by an impenetrable blackness, into the mystery of which it would penetrate if it could. Or there may be a bright sandy bottom, so invitingly clear that it would almost seem pleasant to leap in and lie as in a bed beneath the glassy sheet. Sometimes such grot of the stream is so underlaid and margined with moss, fringed with herbage and overhung with tree-foliage, that the whole water is a deep delicious green. A poet might fancy the silvery strips, drops and sprinkles of the broken mass above, had been fused together again and transmuted into emerald by alchymy of haunting Naiad. There is a spectacle of the sort in the Franconia Notch at the White Mountains, with which the author of *Childe Harold*, had he seen, would have gemmed his lay, attracting the travelling world to linger over its then classic loveliness.

The figure of a stream, as it adjusts itself to the obstacles of its course, has a peculiar charm. It seems to feel its way along with a cunning policy, combining convenience to itself and attractiveness to the beholder, as it

“ Now glitters in the sun and now retires
As bashful, yet impatient to be seen.”

What grace, what majesty in the larger river, as from the narrow of the hills it comes widening out again, sweeping its shining train far round the meadow, then marching through the wood, or wheeling round the promontory, till fancy alone can follow the stately procession.

Then there are the thousand ponds, or lakes, as called in Europe, embosomed in our country. Holding the vision to an expansive unity of spectacle, silvering their blue under the sunshine, or darkening it under the cloud, they are the watery magnificent. The eye of taste owns them all. They are the fee simple of all the eyes in the nation, if they will but grasp and hold them with a loving sight.

CHAPTER XII.

SCENERY AROUND WATER.

“The visible scene
Would enter unawares into his mind
With all its solemn imagery, its rocks,
Its woods, and that uncertain heaven received
Into the bosom of the steady lake.”

WORDSWORTH.

THE scenery around water, though before indirectly included, now claims more particular mention. It is a sort of costume to the liquid, changeable, and more life-like spectacle, imparting adornment and receiving interest, and as it were life in return.

There are the grassy declivity and pebbly margin; the jutting rocks, or long smooth side of a cliff. There are the trees and

shrubs leaning against or standing upon these varieties of shore, concealing and revealing them by turns, and contrasting their green umbrage with the shaded blue of the water. These gazed at from the opposite side of a considerable expanse, form a picture which leisure might travel quite a distance to see and be made oblivious of care.

How charming, viewed at a little distance, are some of the capes which thrust themselves into the inland pond or some of our ocean bays and creeks. How softly the eye slips from the fresher green of the moister points and meets the water that sleeps, or the wavelets that waken and glitter upon the margin. Then in another place is seen the white beach rounding in under the grassy or bushy shore, like a bright rim curiously inlaid between the azure water and the verdant land.

Circumadjacent objects reflected in the crystal element below are an absolute enchantment. They seem an earthly embroidery to another firmanent, which hollows its vast concave down, down to nethermost gran-

deur. A Parnassian ancient might have fancied it a cerulean theatre, where his water-nymphs could game in chariots of cloud around the golden goal of a sun.

CHAPTER XIII.

AN ILLUSION.

“ Gentle Nature plays her part
With ever-varying wiles,
And transient feignings with plain truth.
So well she reconciles,
That those fond idlers most are pleased
Whom oftenest she beguiles.”

WORDSWORTH.

THERE is a spectacle with which one may always be amused in travelling, and in which childhood certainly might find curious sport to its frolicsome eye. As we have never seen it even mentioned, we will enliven our page by its description. It is the apparent motion of objects on the wayside as one passes rapidly along. Here is combined the gracefulness of motion with picturesque beauty. Indeed it seems as if inanimate nature were im-

bued with life and acting the picturesque and beautiful as on a theatre.

Any mode of travelling creates the scene, but that by steam-car makes it the most perfect from the velocity. We cannot better illustrate than by describing the spectacle to be witnessed on the rail-road between Boston and Salem. Suppose yourself seated at the window on the right hand side and going Eastward. The grounds, fences, and trees nearest, seem to run past as if they had life like animals, or soul of fire and breath of vapor, as the train has, and are speeding to the city you have left. The hills and banks along the bay-shore appear to stand still, or to have a vacillating movement, as if doubtful which way to go, or whether they shall go or stay. But the objects at a still greater distance, the round, heaving islands, and the towering vessels in sail-swelled pomp, are proceeding with you, not apparently at the same rapid rate, but with a stately glide, such as might befit things of their magnitude. Now and then these distant travellers will be hidden from view by an intervening high ground, anon they slide grace-

fully out from behind, keeping opposite to your elbow, as if they had agreed to companionship and were bound to keep on.

On approaching Salem you shoot in among romantic cliffs, soft meadow-plats, gleaming water-sheets, scatterings of shrubbery, and noble tree clumps ; here you have wildness and beauty in grotesquest sport, as if they had caught the olden witchery, and were harmlessly playing it out for the amusement of passengers.

Returning to Boston, there is a somewhat ludicrous spectacle on the northern side. The dark cliffs back of Lynn add to their picturesque charm by taking up their march in long procession. It may be that a marsh is thickly peopled with hay-stacks ; these set to dancing, as it were, round a centre in a sort of elliptical orbit, apparently with as much regularity of time and interspaces as if they had been trained by a master and were governed by a lively music. The eye is quite mazed at such strange “poetry of motion,” and the organ of mirthfulness catches a brief pastime from this jigging of the hay-giants on the lawn of their homestead.

Further on, the Chelsea hills shoot by each other with beautiful effect from their elliptical shape and the peeping of houses between. It seems as if they were on rail-roads too ; yet with all this mighty travel making no noise.

At length the Charlestown church-steeple walks off as on a visit to the neighboring spires of the city. And the monarch of American monuments puts off his steady sobriety for the frolic, and not to be alone in his grandeur ; or as fancy might say, he leaves his hero-hallowed throne, and takes Boston-ward to thank the patriotic ladies that he was not left a dumpy dwarf through lack of provision for growth.

CHAPTER XIV.

MOUNTAINS.

“ I live not in myself, but I become
Portion of that around me ; and to me
High mountains are a feeling.”

BYRON.

WE owe an especial tribute to the Mountains, and with the poet's Alp-begotten thought we begin our homage. We sympathize entirely with his lofty enthusiasm. Of all earth's scenery they have been by us most sought, most loved. In their changefulness of aspect they were the playmates of our youthful fancy. For us they skirted themselves with the fantastic mist, and wore a wreath of it for a crown. For us they caught each crimson dawn, and told of its beauty. For us they lifted a footstool of grandeur for the throne of the setting sun. Then they purpled in the twilight that

our vision might have wider and more varied range for its evening pastime of hues.

With what grand command they crowned the climax of scenery that educed our taste and charmed our spirit at native home ; the even meadow, the winding brook, the maple groves, the oval hills, the over-looking mountains. There they now stand, far-seen friendly indicators of all that subjacent loveliness. Mighty talismans of memory ! when discerned from any lofty distance, how we live over again sunrises and sunsets, and many a blessed day between ; many rambles alone, and some in sweet companionship ; alternate labor and literature, dreamy musings and keen inquisitive thought. How reappear the long reaching prospects of confiding hope, and the glittering ascents of bold aspiration. How our heart lifts itself and thrills with this magic renewal of the past ! But anon it bends in serene, submissive gratitude to One who from above these heights climbed by sight or sought by the soul, put forth a providential hand, and held back and bore forward, and carried to and fro in devious course, ever displaying the varied

pictures of his pencil, and maturing the delicious, innocent taste which is here permitted an humble expression.

Pardon, benevolent Reader, the reference to dear landscapes, and a personal experience, without which these word-paintings might not have been. The name of our topic has been a magic, let us now together feel the spell.

We would have the soul as early as possible stamped with the impressiveness of mountains. In the first place, their forms are a study. There is the variety of surface shaping their bases ; then therefrom their ascent, gradual and smooth with pasture or thickset wood, or more diverse in outline with round protuberance of hill or huge projection of bluff.

Lastly their summits: these lift into long ridge with more or less discernible prominences, like an enormous rampart, with bastions builded against the storms. They otherwise swell gently into curve, moulding the attractive beauty of an arch out of the horizon. Again they heave boldly into peak, or shoot wildly into pinnacle, as it were, notching in and splitting open the sky.

When several of these abrupt heights happen quite closely together in cluster or range, a curious spectacle is presented by the sky to the distant observer, fancy assisting the view. A belt of the great firmament, bending majestically over from the zenith, finishes its descent earthward with inverted mountain-shapes, of cloudy grey or azure bright ; these confronting the dark blue earth-giants in grandeur-making competition.

In travelling in the vicinity of a mountain it is entertainingly noticeable how it will vary its appearance, as the beholder shifts his relative position. One can hardly believe sometimes, that it is the same object, it is so unaccountably altered. It seems a sort of Protean pantomime playing pranks of transformation.

Again, it is a matter of interest, how the hue of mountains changes, ever imparting novel interest, from the first peep of morning to the final shading-off at evening twilight.

How the thick cloudiness of some days will shed down upon them its sombreness. How will the dark overhanging thunder cloud deepen their blue to the very verge of blackness,

impressing the solemn sublime, as cloud and mountain seem almost joined and blended together in one dark expanse. We say, let the lesson of the school-room be left, let domestic labor pause, where no necessity hurries, to place the mind under such enlivening, or soul-subduing aspects.

No scenery probably tends more to awaken and ennoble the sentiment of patriotism than mountains.

Seas make their magnificence common to the separate lands they expand between. The all-encompassing ocean gives its sublimity of waters to a world. But mountains—solid earth's uttermost grandeur—are a nation's own. They are fastened upon a country's form like a vast member—the device and creation of God. They bear upon their sides and hold beneath their surfaces its cities and villages, yet to be built, together with implements and ornaments yet to be wrought. With perpetual industry they spin forth the

“Streams that tie her realms with silver bands.”

They are not only individualized, each by its own peculiar aspect, but consecrated by a par-

ticular name. They are clad with local associations, and mantled all over and beautified to the heart by a national interest. When a neighboring inhabitant journeys away, his last backward look, his first returning glance, are to them. They indicate his home. Ah! just down there beneath, are his best loves, and his bosom thrills again. The mariner or other traveller across the ocean holds them in his last aching gaze as long as he can; and thitherward his heart aims its last adieu. On his return, how he labors for the earliest glimpse at their summits. They seem as soaring heralds from home—angels of the great patriotic presence, coming to meet him, crying “Hitherward—O, welcome!”

Mountains are the final citadel of national freedom, founded when the land was prepared above the seas, as if freedom should be esteemed as dear as life. Here is the last refuge of the patriot few. And if these should be captured, the heaven-built battlements still abide to await their return. War will not dig them down or dismantle them of their ridged walls and caverned embrasures. Here the

Genius of Liberty dwells ever fast, still sounding her trumps of echo, and waving to and fro her signal banners of cloud. She never dies. The Eternal spirit is her life. He keeps her high toward his All-mighty presence, that when the exiles shall return, or a nation shall break its chains, or arise regenerate from its vices, or when a youthful people shall nobly aspire, they may all know whither to turn for encouragement and blessing.

Such are the mountains to the patriotic, at least to the classically poetic mind. Go then, fellow countrymen, and gaze. Stand with your children around you and teach them to look up to these "everlasting hills" with a reverent love. If the blue ridges and peaks stretch and tower not within view of home, let an hour or hours be spent in resorting to spots, where may be seen those piles and points that so impress with grandeur, and a grandeur too, so romantically connected with the cherished idea of native land. Yea, go up into their very midst,—Fathers with your families—Teachers with your schools, and hold intimate communion. But let all voices be

hushed, except to fitting language—that of meditative, ennobling thought. There study every aspect and catch its picture upon the memory ; gorge, glen, cavern, and crevice—veiled in shadow or hidden in deeper darkness ; shivered crag, rocky acclivity, or wooded brow, and far bold summit. Be still and hearken also—the sigh of trees, the dash of waters, the roar of winds, the resoundings of echo—it is from the ancient orchestra of the solitudes, ever awaiting the sublime symphonies of the living heart !

Thus far the scenes, the sounds, the influences below. But rest not contented with these. One whom the mountain Muse and the genius of Freedom inspired in very childhood thus admonishes, and would bear you up on the pinions of his verse,—

Thou who wouldst see the lovely and the wild,
Mingled in harmony on Nature's face.
Ascend our rocky mountains. Let thy foot
Fail not with weariness, for on their tops
The beauty and the majesty of earth,
Spread wide beneath, shall make thee to forget
The steep and toilsome way.

We would have all our countrymen, if possible, visit those groups of grandeur in the North, which are still more aggrandized by the names of illustrious statesmen. At least let not any talk wishfully of the Alps, and yearn to catch the stormy spirit of Byron from their avalanches, tempests and peaks, till they have held exalted communion with them.

Suppose a clear day in summer, and one is on such ennobling, exciting pilgrimage. His first vision of the mountains is at a far distance. How gracefully they run their smooth, blue pinnacles sharp into the light azure sky. On nearer approach, they enlarge round about, they lift themselves up into grandeur. Finally, stand beneath their mightiest presence, and to pious fancy they seem a manifold throne to which the All-mighty Maker bows the heavens and comes down to receive the awed scene-pilgrim's profoundest homage.

But let this spectacle and its emotions pass. First, now those mountain appurtenances, the two long, deep defiles, where the beautiful, the wild, the grotesque and the grand, in continuous and mingled arrangement break and alter-

nate upon the eye, like the ever novel passages of a romance. One might fancy the well-wrought varying way, with the lofty cliff-sides and forest garniture, and the silver inlay of stream, to be the courtly avenue to the august Royalty of the mountains.

Now ascend. How the thousand objects below, rocks, trees, edifices become belittled. Bold surfaces—the very hills flatten into sameness, and are lost. You stand on Mount Washington ! Lo ! the wide, wide country, deep below, and far, far around ; settled towns, intervening woods, streams, and ponds, the wild stretch of forests, darkly green, and lakes just gleaming upon the horizon. Inferior but high mountains, run away into distance, like a vast ridge of billows that had been stopped and hardened into everlasting stability. Away on the western horizon, the Vermont heights range themselves, but their loftiest peaks in lowly deference. Hitherward, the Connecticut sends up its vapory garlands. Other summits do reverence in blue distinctness, or misty dimness. A peaked family of eminences stand close around as in

courtly waiting. Overhanging all, is the great domed heaven. Centred amid all,—the beholder. What his emotions? There comes up from below, there flows in from around, there descends from above, the grandeur of expanse, the sublimity of vastness.

It is at Mount Washington, the loftiest of our Atlantic country, and grand with its greatest name. Let the occasion be consecrated and holy. Now sing the songs of Freedom. Now quote the immortal poets; add to the mightiness of nature, the living mightiness of genius. Let Romance and Patriotism grow religious, and in still, small, and solemn tones, find expression through sacred hymn, or Holiest writ. Then the soul shall be high, and lifted up to the uttermost, till adoringly lost in that Most High, who was before the mountains were brought forth, or the earth and the worlds had been formed, and who is from everlasting to everlasting.

So do, and it is a life's one occasion of blessedness—Patriotism and Piety in a momentary perfection.

CHAPTER XV.

WATER-FALLS.

———“ Now that I have communed with the vast —
Seen the veil rent from Nature's stormy shrine,
Heard her wild lessons of magnificence
In cataract voices, 'mid the echoing rocks,
I feel a *louder* call upon my soul ——
A trumpet sound ; — and as a soldier girds
Himself for war, so will I gird my thoughts
For conquest o'er the world ! ”

MRS. CAROLINE GILMAN.

THERE are many admirable poetic tributes to the scenery now in view, but we have quoted this fragment because it is crowned with so admirable a moral. It may be compared to the rain-bow cloud of the cataract — a glorious spirit-like being born out of tumult and irresistibly going heavenward. Read the “ Poetry of travelling,” and especially that

intermingling of the beautiful and grand — the lines on Trenton Falls, and who would not visit such scenery, and also catch the mighty inspiration ?

But we must enter into prosaic detail. First, there are the wild rocks—some round, some jagged, some sharply pointed, jutting out, shooting up, with cracks and hollows, or deeper caverns beneath, and gravelly banks, or rude cliffs, and shrubs or trees darkening the sky above — then the waters, wilder still with their swiftness and tumult. First the calmer stream pours to the precipice, then the torrent tumbles this way and dashes that, with foam and spray, and perhaps rainbow, and finally rushes into the deep still pool as to a bed of rest to its tired energies. It may be that some long, high rock may form a cascade, exhibiting here a straightened crystal ribbon of fluid, and there the most delicate threads, and in certain positions of the sun, all glittering with the fascination of prismatic coloring.

Scenes somewhat like these may be found in the vicinity of every town, at least in many-

hilled and many-watered New England. Let such scenes be sought out and become the resort of families and schools as a delicious pastime. With judicious teaching, what a spirit of patriotism, and of religion, might steal forth from the spectacle into the shrine of the young heart.

We would have every American, at least once in his life, visit Niagara. If from the East, let him take the minor falls in his way. There is the Trenton, the bold and beautiful, arrayed in the most fantastic costume of rock and wood. If this shall be the first considerable spectacle of the kind he has seen, can he but exclaim with her already quoted —

“My God,

I thank thee for this wondrous birth of joy,
Unfelt, and unimagined till this hour !”

Then let him pause at the Genesee, until its one long cascade shall impress its sober magnificence. But let him stop and abide as long as he can at Niagara. He has been prepared to go up to the world's wonder, by successive grades of romantic and religious

emotion. He now stands amazed before the power and majesty and glory of waters ; and his spirit bows down with intensest awe before Him who spake, and the cataract was, who wills, and it continues.

Here might Patriotism swell with its loftiest aspirations. Ye energies of enterprise ! tear down the hills, fill up the valleys, bore through the mountains, chequer the whole land with smooth steamways, until every son and daughter of our country shall be able once in life to behold Niagara ! be able to come where the northwestern seas do congregate, and with one stupendous voice of benediction bless the shore of freedom, and lift Nature's sublimest anthem to Freedom's God, before they depart our country's line and lose their nationality in earth's common deep.

We close our chapter with a portion of Mrs. Sigourney's sublime apostrophe to Niagara. It should be read by all who have not beheld and listened to this mighty minister of the All-mighty, to induce them to its presence. It should be perused as often as possible by those who have gazed and heard, that the aw-

ful lesson may not be forgotten ; and also be more deeply impressed by hand-maid genius. We may somewhat add to the chances of perusal.—

“ Flow on forever in thy glorious robe
Of terror and of beauty. Yea, flow on
Unfathomed and resistless. God hath set
His rainbow on thy forehead ; and the cloud
Mantled around thy feet. And He doth give
Thy voice of thunder, power to speak of Him
Eternally — bidding the lip of man
Keep silence — and upon thy rocky altar pour
Incense of awe-struck praise.

* * * * *

Thou dost make the soul
A wondering witness of thy majesty,
But as it presses with delirious joy
To pierce thy vestibule, dost chain its step
And tame its rapture, with the humbling view
Of its own nothingness, bidding it stand
In the dread presence of the Invisible,
As if to answer to its God through thee.”

CHAPTER XVI.

OCEAN.

“ Great beauteous Peing ! in whose breath and smile
My heart beats calmer, and my very mind
Inhales salubrious thoughts.
The Spirit of the Universe in thee
Is visible ; thou hast in thee the life,
The eternal, graceful and majestic life —
Of nature, and the natural human heart
Is therefore bound to thee with holy love.”

CAMPBELL.

THE OCEAN ! What spectacles of the most various, of loveliest beauty, of picturesque interest, of deep, impressive grandeur, does it afford to him who will but pause from his play, or stop from his labor to look. Note on the shore, the milky beaches, the shooting capes, grey with ledge or green with herbage, the ragged rocks, the towering cliffs, the deep fearful gorges, around which the eternal tides flap and dash and overwhelm. Then its waters of varying hues of green, as they

lie close under the eye or recede therefrom, but of dark-blue, as they stretch toward their shoreless infinitude, beneath the blue of the infinite sky. What changing aspects does the sea-surface present beneath cloud or sunbeam, or as the mist hovers in folds or lies in strips just above. Then the vessel that

“Walks the water like a thing of life:”

what can be more fascinating to the vision than this, as it careers on its course in full view from the shore. How graceful its motion ; how as with sudden magic its form and even color shift, as it tacks this way and that, and presents prow or stern or broadside to the eye. Then what a difference between the shaded and the sunny side of the sail. Let the object be a great ship of a clear afternoon, with all its canvass swelled to the utmost, rounding out like the rolls of a thunder cloud, and all this reflecting the slanted but bright beams of the descending sun, and we cannot better express ourselves than to say that it is glorious, glorious !

We would have all the youth in our country,

from the sides of the remotest mountains, for once, if possible, visit the seaside, to behold and wonder at the marvels of God around and upon the great deep. If they could not tarry to gaze on the tremendousness of a storm, they might at least treasure in remembrance the glory of a sunrise from the sea. For the sake of illustration may we be permitted to present a scene beheld from the window of our chamber, at a friend's house on a high ground in Marshfield, the description being penned directly afterward on the spot.

The eastern sky was all purple and gold, and the smooth ocean beneath all purple and gold from reflection. There seemed a double aurora, for so perfect was the correspondence between the original and the reflected light, that we could scarcely define the line of the horizon that parted sky and water. They were fused together, as it were, into one changefully effulgent expanse. Just at the point in the horizon, to which the sun was approaching, there soon appeared a little centre from which radiant hues streamed not only

upward but apparently downward, with a most magical effect. Shortly there was a glimpse of reddish gold. This elongated into size, then rounded, as it came up and up, till there seemed, as it were, an upheaving hill of flame, till half the luminary was above the water, when it gradually shaped itself into a glowing but clearly defined and mighty globe, as ready, apparently, to roll in its magnificent plenitude round the horizon, as to glide and shrink into the sky. To enhance the delight of the scene, the house seemed to be surrounded by birds, pouring out their first gush of mingling melodies, as it were in praise of the Founder of the seas and the Father of lights.

Now were such a spectacle to be presented in nature but once in a hundred years, and the exact moment of it could be calculated, how would men and women and children throng from city and village and the far hills, in wonder to behold it !

But now, who thinks of travelling a mile, on purpose for the cheap yet intense and exalted pleasure of beholding the glories of sunrise at sea.

But ye leisure summer visitors of the Atlantic coast, is it possible that you forego the spectacle, for the sake of late-sitting frivolity at night, and late-lying insensibility or indolence in the morning? Awake, up! The clarion of Genius calls,—let the soul now listen to its exulting strains!

“ With thee beneath my windows, pleasant Sea,
I long not to o'erlook earth's fairest glades
And green savannahs. Earth has not a plain
So boundless or so beautiful as thine.

Nor on the stage
Of rural landscape are there lights and shades
Of more harmonious dance and play than thine.

There's love
In all thy change, and constant sympathy
With yonder sky, thy mistress; from her brow
Thou tak'st thy moods, and wear'st her colors on
Thy faithful bosom.

And all thy balmier hours, fair Element,
Have such divine complexion, crisped smiles,
Luxuriant heavings, and sweet whisperings,
That little is the wonder Love's own Queen
From thee of old was fabled to have sprung.”

CAMPBELL.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE SKIES OF DAY.

“ The sky bent round,
The awful dome of a most mighty temple,
Built by omnipotent hands for nothing less
Than infinite worship.” — PERCIVAL.

How infinitely diversified and varied is the scenery of the common sky, yet the million regard it mostly as the source of fair weather and foul.

First, the form. The curve, of all figures, is the most charming to the sight. In the sky we have this in the highest possible perfection. The lines of utmost beauty woven into one all-surrounding curve. The centre is directly above every beholder. The zenith ever moves with him and pauses above him whenever he stops. From this point down to the whole circle of the horizon is dimension, the largest within the ability of

sense. Then the color when entirely clear, serenest azure, next to green, the vision's dearest love. We cannot briefly better describe the spectacle than to say, beautiful vastness. When the atmosphere is at the purest, there is an intense pleasure in a fixed gaze just at the one heavenly hue. It would seem as if intervening space were annihilated, and the azure flowed into the very eye ; or rather, perhaps, as if the sense plunged in and were lost in cerulean luxury.

Next we have the occasional and fitting garniture of the sky. There are forms, and often hues in the flying or pausing cloud worthy detaining the eye for a new emotion of beauty. But let us first trace these fabrics from their source, so beautiful are their beginnings. There is the vapor as it smokes up from the waters. Perhaps it lies heavily for a time like a light grey wall over the distant stream. Sometimes it rises high into air at once, and quite compactly with a parted and flighty edge, or in broken masses, each with little strips above, as preceding pointers to the direction ; or it may be, in wreaths with

a sort of spiral ascent alternately graceful in form and movement. How cunningly it creeps or fantastically curls up a mountain side, then, it may be, infolding its crown and matting itself into a cap. In certain positions of the morning sun its glances at the mist are reflected in the most delicate tinges, as of floating changeable gauze.

Clouds in the sky ;—a scenery infinitely diverse and ever diversifying anew. Let us contemplate and analyze. There is the separate lonely mass, its singleness giving interest. There is the scalloped circumference, the inner foldings, the middle plainness ; these shaded down from sunny brightness to the dusk of the smooth centre. It rests like the car of a reposing demigod on the serene cerulean. It may be borne along gently by the breeze. Here the graphic and tasteful genius of Bryant shall lend description. He makes such an one the chariot of his Muse, taking his fancy on a world-tour.

“ Beautiful cloud with folds so soft and fair,
Swimming in the pure and quiet air !
Thy fleeces bathed in sun-light, while below

Thy shadow o'er the vale moves slow ;
Where midst their labor pause the reaper train
As cool it comes along the grain."

Sometimes the sky is all crowded with clouds of this character, a multitudinous, multiform host. It is the noblest grandeur of cloudy numbers and diversities.

A more quiet spectacle is the vapor lying farther up and fastened against the sky in lengthy bars over-lapping each other, or with seams of clear or shaded blue between. Or it may be, there is the appearance of innumerable little hassocs threading out from a thicker centre into the clear interspaces. It is enlivening again to observe light thin clouds, lower down, brushing frolicsomenely by this stable ceiling, with their gauzy wings.

There is one scene for which the coming of summer always makes us glad ; and if presenting it less frequently, we feel a privation. It is when the thunder chariots are rolling in their tardy majesty and draw together and interlock each other, as if in thick gathering at some magnificent tournament. See their dark bodies, grey borders, and brassy rims.

What grand involutions, like as wheel upon wheel. Or perhaps their edges point out like awning pinnacles under the sunbeams. But these disappear as if drawn behind a thick dark curtain to hide the display from mortal eyes. Through this the lightnings flash or dart along in momentary crinkles, terrifically beautiful. Harken also ! it is the thunder rolling deep and solemn in the distance, or bursting near with a sudden crash, with echo upon echo, reverberating around the arena of the storm. We have indulged in rather a classical and romantic view of the scene. It is better, however, to seek religious aspects. It is the Almighty who buildeth pavilions there and inhabiteth them with his thunders, and beareth them along on the wings of his winds. He openeth their folds with his hand of lightning, and sweepeth it in swift benefaction, touching the air with healing, freshness and balm.

Why should not a whole school go forth from their uneasy benches and sultry confinement, and watch in still seriousness such a spectacle. In the emotions of beauty, grandeur and sublimity, called forth by the teacher's aid, the terrors usually felt would subside.

It is on such occasions that religion shou'd be made to take its mightier hold, and the heart be bowed down to its most solemn worship ; and all this without an abasing shuddering fear of the Invisible Spirit of the scene. With love and filial trust, as well as with adoring awe, they might contemplate him who maketh the clouds his chariot, and thundereth marvelously with his voice.

Then after a shower there is the out-breaking sun, the glorious rainbow, the glittering waterdrops on herb and tree, and the renewed and most gladsome minstrelsy of birds. But poetry from the earliest ages has been so lavishly rich in its descriptions of these, that any language of ours would be tame and altogether useless. There is one little piece of literature to which we cannot now but refer. It is the "Scene after a Summer Shower," by Andrews Norton. Although read by thousands a hundred times over in Pierpont's Class-book, it will bear perusal a life through, as often as Nature shall renew her original. It should be committed to memory by every child in the land. Thus, the splendor, the joy, the jubilant religiousness of the

spectacle, when recurring, shall be more truly received, felt and reflected by his mirroring soul.

We have already portrayed the Morning in some faint manner. We did so because some of our readers, we fear, have not much acquaintance with the healthy, lovely, fascinating aspect. We wished to excite some curiosity, and if possible kindle a love. But the Evening—the evening sky, all see this, and who of the very least taste does not admire. A thousand writers have revelled too in the description. Their word-paintings of sunsets and twilights would make a volume of themselves. There is, however, one concomitant of the evening glories of which we would just give a hint. It is their reflection from a still sheet of water. The scene is worth walking a mile for at every leisure close of a day.

What a superb reality above, yet a more transcendant illusion beneath. The effulgent segments of two heavenly hemispheres, rim to rim, fastened by a narrow hoop of earth. The sun is going, and goes down; another sun, a luminary twin, face to face, feature to

feature, comes round up to meet him in affectionate greeting. They gaze upon each other's radiant countenances, and retire together, as it were to hide their fraternal embrace behind the curtains of twilight. Now how hue answers to hue, shade to shade, in all the varying, deepening changes. Of the two, the inverted water-scene is the most enchanting, from the novelty of position and the more delicate softness of the radiance. The almost spiritual light seems here spiritualized perfectly. The circles of splendor continue to glide down and to glide up, meeting together and narrowing as they pass away, till they are but glimpses, and are gone. Meanwhile two vast nights have been mutually approaching, marching round in thousand-gemmed majesty. Now they lay together their star-girt brows in embracing repose.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE MOON.

“ When, as the gairish day is done,
Heaven burns with the descended sun,
’Tis passing sweet to mark,
Amid that flash of crimson light,
The new moon’s modest bow grow bright
As earth and sky grow dark.”

BRYANT.

It is said somewhere in Walter Scott’s writings, if we remember rightly, that most youth advance not beyond sixteen without getting as far as “ O thou,” in a sonnet to the moon. We have never even till now so far sought favor of the lovely planet. That she may not now deem us neglectful in our skyey laudatories, our sublunary friends will pardon us for devoting here a little plain prose in her honor.

The new moon is always a welcome sight. There has been a season of darkness. Perchance the clouds have hid the stars, making a stumbling night. How then like a smiling lip on a glowing face appears the delicate curve on the roseate twilight. Well may it be fancied that an oracle of the next month's fortunes is uttered therefrom. How many glad voices answer back from the earth — "There is the new moon — there is the new moon!" To change our figure, placed as it is on the rear of the day, it may be regarded as a little bow of sweet promise that every well spent day shall be crowned by a conscious peace.

Then there is the later, rounder, and finally the full orb'd queen of night. With what serene dignity she rises in a clear east, sweeping the stars with her silvery veil. She dazzles not the eyes away like the day-king, commanding man to useful industry; but his labor over, she invites his regards, and then smiles him away to repose.

With the costume of parting clouds, she magnifies her beauty to the majestic, and our

soft admiration grows intense ; we do romantic homage. Behold her now at loftier walk amid the stars. Fleecy clouds perhaps are trooping past, now shading her beams, then letting them through folds, or flinging them from silvered edges as they leave the unspecked, brightened azure. When the scuds are rapid on the breeze, how sportive the scene. It is as if the queen had put aside her majesty, and were at pastime with cloud and star. Our own spirits dance in harmony. We almost wish for wings or power of disembodied transition to soar up thither and mingle in the magic, joyous maze.

The autumnal full moon is the perfection of lunar majesty. It seems as if she was conscious of the golden lustre of the harvests, and the effulgence of leaf-hues ; and conscious, too, that in the absence of solar favor, without her, their glory would be looked for in vain—all dead and shrouded in the pall of darkness—the far star-gleams, able only to disclose how great the fading away had been.

The going down of the moon in the deep night horizon has a pleasing beauty. At the

older phases there is an accompanying pensiveness, as being after midnight, the observer may be left in a darkened, sleeping solitude, indeed to feel alone.

We have thus done our first public devoir to the gentle luminary. To our readers there was no need, as hundreds before have held up a far better medium of admiration. We might have quoted from the poets, but we would individualize our offering, though it were through the faint sheen of our own language.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE STARS.

“ The faded West looks deep, as if its blue
Were searchable, and even as I look,
The twilight hath stole over it, and made
Its liquid eye apparent, and above
To the far-stretching zenith and around,
As if they waited on her like a queen,
Have stole out the innumerable stars
To twinkle like intelligence in heaven.
Is it not beautiful ?
Fit for the young affections to come out
And bathe in like an element ! ”

WILLIS.

To the informed understanding the stars are greater singly, than the earth's nearer satellite, however charming in her friendly lustre ; together, they are the mightiness of hosts in the sublimity of magnitude and distance. But we must now view them simply as scenery, the

vision's "poetry of heaven." Of all that the sky presents there is perhaps no one object so bewitchingly beautiful as the evening star at its largest phasis. It would seem that the light of the retiring sun, now disparted into manifold splendors and hues, had passed into golden unity again, and were inurned in that star, and thence streamed down in liquid, yet softest glory. No wonder it has been named from the goddess of love ; for if the seraphic effulgence does not directly exite, it certainly predisposes to the tender emotion in more melting temperaments. The greater leisure, and the play of more delicate sensibilities at the close of the day, and the twilight's train of charms, all conspire, probably, to open the heart more widely to this flow of magic. No wonder the poets of all time have raved of the "Star of eve." They have found full response, at least from the earlier and more romantic heart. Our youthful readers will not be displeased, we trust, at whatever portion of the "dewy radiance" we may have caught on our prosaic page.

We now turn to the general heavens.

There is a singular aspect of them worthy of the lifted eye, which we will first describe. It is when they are all dotted over with small cloud-fleeces, and equally marked with azure openings ; through these appear the stars — perhaps a single star to a spot. How the eye runs bewildered over the alternating variety of the vault ; reposing here and there on the pillows of cloud, and leaning over to the star-beams from those cerulean founts. At length some single luminary fixes the gaze. It is of larger dimension, or some deeper emotion is called up in the soul by its peculiar radiance. It almost might be fancied that the spirit of some departed friend had taken abode in the fair orb, and were distilling from its cherished affections, sweet, pure influences into our answering hearts. Indeed all the stars have a sort of spiritual aspect to him who has a refined fancy, and aspires after the beautiful in its least sensual forms. When the day toil is over, its bustle done, and tranquillity falls as it were from the great calm heaven on all abroad, how the soul is charmed away to the stars, as to abodes where labor does not weary, and

the weary of this world may at length find rest. At least we are prepared by such contemplation to turn away and shut the outward sense to sleep with the inward consciousness that there is spread abroad within this resplendent garniture of stars another universe of purer and more enrapturing loveliness and glory, to the revelations of which we shall at length be received.

A clear winter night is the season to feel the great "poetry of heaven" to the utmost. The air is in its best elemental purity. Let the earth be mantled with the unstained snow. The prismatic atoms of the surface reflect the star-beams, and spread a darkling magnificence, as a carpet fit for the tread of upright man, with his face toward heaven, and more than ever realizing the honor and glory with which he has been divinely crowned. Now lift the eye — lo, a vast canopy of blazing gems. Stand and gaze straight upward — it holds its central height directly over the head ; walk — the cerulean apex proceeds with you as if borne by invisible servitors above the apparent lord of the scene ; one spacious white brilliancy

of foot-stool, one vast environage of stars — all owned by him who solitarily stands amidst. For, him the “beautiful vastness” is in jewels — a royal diadem, or rather a courtly roof of woven diadems, lifted high and spread abroad that kingly man might keep the glory of the emblem over his head, yet be free from the weight of its richness.

Thus far we have regarded the heavens as a scenic expanse ; but the picture retains the eye and fills the fancy an illusive moment only. Religion and philosophy speak, and the spell is done. The crowns are broken, the dome vanishes, the gems grow to suns, and the beholder is at present but a poor vital atom amid the glorious infinitude of another’s realm ; he is told that his duty is perfect obedience to this sovereignty ; his honor, that he is an immortal and ever-growing intelligence ; his glory, that he is the offspring of God, who has prepared a crown for him surpassing the stars, and laid up, to be put on by the pure in higher, holier heavens.

CHAPTER XX.

WINTER.

“Come see the North wind’s masonry—
The frolic architecture of the snow.”

R. W. EMERSON.

WINTER also has its scenery, and that of a more peculiar and striking interest, inasmuch as the infinitely profuse and varied spectacles of the open portions of the year are almost entirely withdrawn.

What delicate adornments, what magnificent shows, what exhibitions of the grand has winter. Take the last of November or the beginning of December, when the eye has begun to be quite tired and sick of the all-spreading brown and barrenness, and who does not remember and feel the scene we will briefly describe.

The clouds gather and thicken and darken at length into one unvaried hue all over the sky, lowering down, capping the mountains, and almost touching the hills. There is no wind, the air is heavy and stilled into perfect deadness. There are guesses that it will rain. But no. The cloud at the distant horizon is shedding its contents, and there of a hue novelly light. The heights are hidden, as by a loose curtain of mist. At length they drop from right above the head. It is the first snow upon the prepared and waiting ground. Its damp feathery dabs come down quite perpendicularly in the motionless air. You can almost count a hundred of them before they stop, they are so bulky and slow. Look up, and how curiously the white, but slightly shadowed millions appear. Look down, and how they pat, pat, countlessly and all without sound, except it be the gentlest whisper of greeting to the welcoming earth.

For a few moments how singularly beautiful the spectacle of the bright crystallised flecks, sprinkled all over the dusky ground, roofs and fences. Soon, a universal white

prevails, and finally it is noticeable and interesting, with what distinctness the foot shapes of the household, the cattle, and even the domestic fowls are imprinted on the thin snow, as on the smooth plate of an engraver. Such occasionally is the first picture in the exhibitions of winter. Is it not worth asking outdoor boyhood to pause before, and leading more sedentary girlhood to the window, to look at ?

But let me present picture second. We will suppose it the ensuing day. Fair weather has come—a clear blue sky, a beaming sun, and a still atmosphere. Now, how delightful the contrast with the melancholy dun of yesterday morning. The pure white carpet, spreading all round to the whole circle of the horizon to meet the pure azure canopy. Let the eye be so placed as to rove across a plain, then over hill above hill, and finally up to lofty mountains piercing heaven's bluest depths with their whitest pinnacles, and you have an expansive magnificence, and a towering grandeur, such as the stern simplicity of winter alone can present.

The break of day over such a scene is worth taking a journey for. The mountain height faintly reddens in the glimpse of the morning, then glows more distinctly, then glitters with the richest radiance. The delicate rose-color seems to run from this point as from a centre, down the mountain, and over the hill-sides, and thence to the plains, till the whole face of the snow is in blush, as delicate and lovely as the cheek of young and healthy innocence.

Again, there is a grandeur in the fierce snow storm, which it is better to feel and enjoy, than to cower over a fire, thinking nothing about it but safety from its violence. How the element drives through the air, whirls round the edifice, whips against its sides, obscuring with its flaky mists, the objects near, and altogether hiding those at a distance. It is romance, it is rapture to let one's own spirits loose also, to mingle with the wild career, and become, as it were, a very portion of the harmless tempest.

Then comes the clear cold next day. The furious wind whistles from the north-west

over the loaded earth. How the loose snow scuds before the blast, down the hill, through the valley or across the plain, and up the hills again, then wheeling into the enormous drift, or capering over its ridgy summit, all as if the snow streaks were alive and mad with frolic, like a thousand white haired coursers, loosened from the rein. Were such a scene of elemental sport to be seen but once in a lifetime, what family would not rush to the doors, what school would not leave study and play to enjoy. But now in its very commonness, not one in a thousand particularly minds it. Yet here, what power, what swiftness, and withal what grace !

Would that all the rustics of our country, shut up by snow-drifts, or shivering along highways and wood-paths, could be aware of these solacing charms which come with the winter's cold.

The magnificence of ice-clad trees is arresting to the dullest eye, and withal has been so often portrayed by writers, and so entirely above our equalling, that our poor pen need not describe ; and indeed it would be dazzled away should it make the attempt.

One scene more — the wintry-vernal, if we may so call it. We have the longer warmer days of the earliest spring. Now the melting of snows, the trickling of the drops, the gathering of the streams, the gush and rush of many waters — there is a wild life about this, which bewitches the spirit into it somewhat as the snow storm did from whose brooding repose this water-tempest is born. Bryant has thus stirringly sent it through the channels of his verse : —

“ Then sing aloud the gushing rills
And the full spring, from frost set free,
That, brightly leaping down the hills,
Are just set out to meet the sea.”

CHAPTER XXI.

CONCLUSION.

“ His spirit drank
The spectacle ; sensation, soul, and form,
All melted into him ; they swallowed up
His animal being ; in them did he live,
And by them did he live ; they were his life.”

WORDSWORTH.

THESE lines express the enjoyment to be found in nature by thousands and tens of thousands who are now without it, simply from want of cultivation. We have but poorly executed our work, but we trust that it may be of some use in leading to self-culture, and inciting parents and school teachers to inspire a taste for scenery in the young. Why shall the sketches of painters be so much sought, and the originals of the Infinite artist so much neglected ? It should not be so ; we feel that it should not be so. Walk into a city gallery of a pleasant day, and you

hear a few envied people of leisure criticising and admiring the tints, lights and shades of the mimic landscape, when the surpassing, perfected picturings of God lie in exhaustless profusion every where, to be discriminated and admired by millions, without price, and even without slackening the hand of gainful toil ; but alas ! now they are as a blank, excepting to a comparative few.

O, what pastimes of body and spirit teachers and schools will have, in the air, in the beauty, the glory of nature abroad ; yea what ecstasy, when they shall duly estimate the difference between man's mean school-house of timber and masonry, and this not made by hands, the unwallled, ever-aired, and healthy school-room of creation.

Finally, thus let our country's men and women be trained from childhood up, and how would early, rural home, be all surrounded by pictures, dear to taste, to imagination, to heart, and to memory ; pictures to which those once resident there might turn with vernal thrillings, from the coldest, darkest wintriness of prolonged life. Country, more-

over, would be sprinkled with innumerable spots to which the heart of patriotism would fasten ; yea, into which it would grow, if we may so speak, as into a warm living bosom. How could such fail to glow with most effectual aspirations to improve, and bless, and glorify the land of nativity, and the heritage of freedom.

And lastly, but most especially, let the idea of the holy, parental Creator be ever connected as the all-pervading and upholding spirit, and how would religion be radiant from each tint of loveliness ; how would it envelope the forms of beauty, and the masses of grandeur, and overlay the mysterious expanses of the sublime ! How would Religion, going forth from this inner temple of the soul, fill with its holy, enhancing presence, the great outward temple of God, from the verdure and flowers around the altar of prayer, to the azure and stars of the dome.

THE END.

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